ABSTRACT

A storage object such as a virtual disk drive or a raw logical volume is contained in a UNIX compatible file so that the file containing the storage object can be exported using the NFS or CIFS protocol and shared among UNIX and MS Windows clients or servers. The storage object can be replicated and backed up using conventional file replication and backup facilities without disruption of client access to the storage object. For client access to data of the storage object, a software driver accesses the file containing the storage object. For example, a software driver called a virtual SCSI termination is used to access a file containing a virtual SCSI disk drive. Standard storage services use the iSCSI protocol to access the virtual SCSI termination. An IP replication or snapshot copy facility may access the file containing the virtual SCSI disk drive using a higher-level protocol.